UNITARIAN MONTHLY

An Organ for the propagation of the Doctrine of Unity in Religion, Theology, Philosophy and Society.

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By courtesy of "The Inquirer."

REV. E. ROSALIND LEE, B.A.

New Resident Minister, Free Christian Church,
Narborough Road, Leicester.

(see page 76).

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Notes and News.

" One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves ! "
—Tennyson.

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An Organ for the propagation of
THE DOCTRINE OF UNITY
In Religion, Theology, Philosophy and Society.

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Contributors' copy should be sent in NOT LATER THAN the second Monday in the month.

COMING OF AGE.

It was 20 years ago, September, 1903, that the first issue of this Monthly appeared, being for October of that year. Consequently, by this October number for 1923 the magazine enters upon its 21st year. The Editor hopes to celebrate the " coming of age " by returning to the size of 16 pages, commencing with next January issue, and as a step towards that this present number is increased from 8 to 12 pages. Periodicals still suffer from high cost of production following the war conditions, and to double the size of the magazine from 8 to 16 pages cannot be achieved without the help of advertisements and a largely increased circulation. To get this larger circulation every effort will be made. Who will help?

ERRATUM.—In last issue, p. 69, col. 1, par. 5, " whatever expresses the will of God in His word " should read, " is His word."

May we ask ministers, school superintendents and teachers to say something on the Temperance question on Temperance Sunday? See circular letter on another page.

The new Midland Provincial Assembly of Unitarian and Kindred Churches will hold its first Annual Meetings at Nottingham on October 1st and 2nd.

Alderman C. Aveling, J.P., the Mayor-elect of Southport, is a member of the Unitarian Church.

A Unitarian movement has been started at Bangor, Co. Down, Ireland.

The Pendleton Unitarian Church will celebrate its Jubilee at the end of November.

The Scarborough Unitarian Church celebrated its Jubilee, September 2nd and 3rd.

£100 is bequeathed to our church at Ballee, Co. Down; and £50 to our Welsh Chapel at Capel-y-groes.

The Cardiff Unitarian League of Youth has 37 members.

There are protests against the closing of any of our churches during holiday vacations. It certainly does not look well that such closing should be.

At Newark 161 scholars and friends joined in the annual outing in connection with the Unitarian Sunday School.

Rev. W. H. Drummond has had the degree of Doctor of Laws conferred upon him by the National University of Szeged, Hungary, during his recent visit to that country, and he and Mrs. Drummond have started on a world tour in connection with his work as Secretary of the International Congress. They are now in America, where Meadville confers upon Dr. Drummond the honorary D.D.

We join in hearty congratulations to Mr. Ion Pritchard, London, on having reached his 80th birthday, August 24th, who has rendered life-long service to our Unitarian cause.

The meetings of the Summer School for Sunday School Teachers organised by the Northern Sunday School Federation at Watermillock, near Bolton, have been most successful in attendances, lectures, discussions, excursions, fellowship and every way.

The Leigh Unitarian Church is bequeathed a gift of £200 by the will of the late Mr. Richard Greenhough.

At the Newport Unitarian Church, I.W., the whole congregation stood up to signify a desire to join the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches, September 2nd.

The local Chapter of the Laymen's League at Stand Chapel conducted the services on September 2nd in the absence of the minister on holiday.

A Forward Movement, which includes open-air meetings is being carried out by the Unitarians of Yeovil, Somerset.

Rev. H. Gow, D.D., President, British and Foreign Unitarian Association, has been on a visit to our Scottish Churches during September.

David Ricardo, the economist, who died 100 years ago, September 11th, became a member of the Unitarian congregation at Hackney in 1809, under Rev. Robert Aspland's ministry.

The "Inquirer" has started a subscription fund to help the Japanese.

The London District Unitarian Society has sent out a circular letter urging ministers and church committees of our London churches to make " a big effort this winter to double their membership.

A unique movement is being attempted in Bootle, Liverpool, with the watchword, " Union without Uniformity," to get all denominations to join in a united effort to promote the Christian way of life. The letter manifesto making the appeal is signed by every clergyman—8 vicars and 2 curates—and every Nonconformist minister, except one—including the Unitarian—the exception being a Baptist. There is to be a house-to-house visitation to get all people attached as far as possible, and a united convention is to be held.

The British Red Cross Society has made an appeal for a large sum of money for cancer research, and by the middle of September subscriptions had reached £55,000. Does it mean more useless vivisection? A doctor at the Science Congress gave evidence in favour of diet cure.

ABROAD.—Good reports come from Adelaide, S. Australia, that the Sunday School is thriving, the Chapter of the Laymen's League is flourishing, and a Sunday Afternoon Bible Class has been formed, followed by tea and music until evening service.

It is stated that arrangements have been made by the church at Auckland, N.Z., to " broadcast " its message.

The Capetown Unitarian Church issues an interesting Calendar, with good list of activities, including Church Services, Sunday School, Literary Society, Young People's Guild, Women's League, Tennis Club and Propaganda Secretary. On its back page for September is reproduced from " The Unitarian Monthly " (not acknowledged) the short article on " The Humanity of Jesus Christ."

The terrible earthquake in Japan excites the sympathy of all nations for the Japanese in this great catastrophe ,and much ready help is being sent. It is still unknown whether the Free Christian Church at Tokio is destroyed or not, or whether many Unitarians are lost.

A THEOLOGICAL PUZZLE.

That three are one and one is three
Is an idea that puzzles me.
By many a learned sage 'tis said,
That three are one in the Godhead;
That Father, Son and Holy Ghost
Are three at least and one at most.

'Tis thus they would all sense confound
By making God a strange compound,
Of natures two and persons three,
All of the same equality.

The Father, then, may be the Son,
For both together make but one;
The Son may likewise be the Father
Without the smallest change of either;
Yea, and the blessed Spirit be
Father, Son, and Trinity.

This is the creed of Christian folks
Who style themselves true orthodox,
And which against plain common sense
You must believe or give offence.

Rev. Wm. Fesenden.

Rev. E. Rosalind Lee, B.A.

NARBOROUGH ROAD CHURCH, LEICESTER.

IT is a significant sign of the times that women are now entering into the various professions formerly monopolised by men. It was inevitable that the movement for sex equality should extend to the ministry of religion. As far back as 1904 Rev. Gertrud von Petzold, M.A., was in the Unitarian ministry, and at the Free Christian Church, Narborough, Road, Leicester. It is a notable fact that the same church has secured the services of the Rev. E. Rosalind Lee, B.A., as its resident minister. Miss Lee has had a varied experience which has been much enriched by a missionary tour round the world, from which she has only recently returned. Born at Birmingham in 1884, she lived for a short time as a child near Leicester and attended the Great Meeting Chapel, Rev. H. Gow being then its minister. Her father, Mr. T. Grosvenor Lee, was a near relative of the late Mr. T. T. Paget, who was M.P. for South Leicestershire. She was educated at the Edgbaston High School, Birmingham, and at Newnham College, Cambridge, obtaining honours in the Mathematical Tripos, 1905, afterwards taking advantage of the temporary offer of Trinity College, Dublin, to give degrees to Oxford and Cambridge women, and was made B.A. For a few years living at home near Stourbridge she joined the Unitarian Church there, taught in its Sunday School, helped to form the branch of the Women's League, took part in social work there and in Birmingham, where she was Hon. Sec. of the Graham Street School for Domestic Service. From the beginning of the Women's League she has been a member of the Central Committee at headquarters. After the death of her parents she acted as Superintendent of the Girls' School connected with the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham, and then went into Wales, where she became lay minister—in the Rhondda Valley—at Pentre, 1917-19, taking the Lay Workers' course of theological study at the same time, and continued as fully-recognised minister 1919-20. She went to America with a Hibbert Scholarship and had nine months in Cambridge, Mass., then travelled across Canada and down the Pacific Coast as Billings' Lecturer, and through New Zealand; visited relations in Australia and four of our churches; acted as co-pastor of our Melbourne Church for six months, and visited Capetown, S. Africa, on her way home. Her friend, Miss Hargrove, eldest daughter of the late Rev. Charles Hargrove, accompanied her upon these travels, and is living with Miss Lee in her new settlement at Leicester. Her father, Mr. T. Grosvenor Lee, took an active part in the affairs of the Unitarian denomination, and was President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Her mother was a Notcutt, of Ipswich, so Miss Lee comes of Unitarian families on both sides. Her father's grandfather was the Rev. Charles Berry, who was minister at the Leicester Great Meeting for 56 years. Miss Lee is a member of the Colonial Sub-Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, also of the Committee of the Sunday School Association, of the Committee of the National Conference, and Hon. Sec. of the Reid Trust for the Higher Education of Women—a position held up to death by her aunt, Miss R. L. Notcutt. Mr. Oliver Lee, Miss Lee's brother, is actively associated with our Church of the Messiah, Birmingham her sister, Mrs. Wight, has been Fellowship Secretary for the League of Unitarian Women, and is well known in denominational affairs in London. Miss Lee's settlement at Leicester augurs well for the future of the Narborough Road Church, which has laboured under serious difficulties for some time. Under the inspiration of new hopes and of Miss Lee's ministry, there is a brighter prospect for happy encouragement to both minister and people.

Literature.

LITERATURE.—"The Practical Teaching of Jesus of Nazareth," as found in the Gospel according to Luke, Chapters 17-23. Thirty-five lessons compiled by Arthur W. Fox, M.A. 2s. 6d. net., The Sunday School Association, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C. 2.

Our excellent contributor, Rev. Arthur W. Fox, has again laid Sunday School teachers under a debt of gratitude for having made these lessons from the gospel according to Luke available for wider use by the publication of this volume, and the Sunday School Association has added to its great usefulness by issuing it for use in our Sunday Schools. This is the third set of lessons Mr. Fox has compiled and published. They have been used in the Bible Class of the Todmorden Sunday School Union, in which teachers from various denominations met together. The plan of each lesson is: First, the "point of the lesson" is given and expounded, then follows a goodly collection of illustrations drawn from anecdote and story, with additional references to further illustrations for the guidance of the teachers. There is a great variety of subjects, and they are so clearly and plainly set forth that any teacher can without difficulty make effective and helpful use of them. We commend this book to all who wish to give some definite religious guidance to young people and a clear understanding of the very practical nature of the teaching which proceeded from Jesus.

"Memorials of a Ministry," sermons and addresses by James Edwin Odgers, M.A., D.D., 7s. 6d. net., Basil Blackwell, publisher, 49, Broad Street, Oxford.

There is much that is pathetic and inspiring in this volume of "memorials." The author is a much-beloved teacher and minister belonging to the people denominated "Unitarian." On April 14th, 1923, he attained his 80th birthday, and this volume is a birthday gift from his brothers, sons and daughters, who have jointly undertaken its publication. Dr. Odgers' ministry includes pastorates at Liverpool (assistant, Renshaw Street), 1865-6; Kendal, 1868; Bridgwater, 1869-78; Liverpool (Toxteth), 1878-82; Altrincham, 1882-93; Tutor, Unitarian Home Missionary Board (now College), Manchester, 1878-84, and Principal, 1884-91; Hibbert Lecturer, Manchester College, Oxford, 1894-1906; Tutor, Manchester College, Oxford, 1907-13. The "Memorials" here selected include sermons delivered in chapels of which he was at the time resident minister, two addresses in Manchester College Chapel, Oxford, a sermon to children, a confirmation address, an address to the young, and a sermon for the British and Foreign Unitarian Association Annual Meetings, 1887. They all very clearly and faithfully reveal the mind and heart of the author. There is largeheartedness, wide catholicity of spirit, and resolute sincerity abounding in these utterances. They are infused throughout with a warm and earnest piety, along with the reasonableness of true religion. Joy and pride in the freedom of the "Open Trust," in our undogmatic "inheritance," and in our Nonconformist history, are well expressed, and there is not a page which does not make good reading. One quotation from a sermon on "Daniel's Window" must suffice as an example of the strong common sense and insistence on standing firmly by the loyalties of conviction which characterise this book throughout. "Why, when every opportunity is given you of concealing the fact that you are a Quaker or a Unitarian, do you persist in making it known? Why open your particular window just now when all the rest of the street is shut? . . . This kind of tone or atmosphere renders religious and moral sincerity much more difficult. . . . You never know when the moment in which the only thing for you is to deliver your soul will come. . . . There are things like gambling and betting on games at which you can draw a line which is, I am glad to say, more and more respected. But there are social moments which put questions to you alone. Can you stand light speaking of religious convictions altogether? Can you stand empty ridicule of things which are serious to you in your heart of hearts? Are you going to stand any of these things because somebody is kind enough to say, 'We know you are a Dissenter, but if you do not care to mention it, we will not'? I believe that nobody, not even the man of emptiest head, has any respect, even any liking, for one who accepts such a situation."

The book has an excellent portrait of Dr. Odgers as frontispiece. The sermons which follow it are of permanent value and not merely "voices of the past." Our readers who may get this volume are sure to prize it and to keep it as a much-valued possession.

Four lay preachers, members of the Croydon Free Christian Church, carried on the Sunday services during the holidays of the minister.

A gift of £500 to our Bank Street Chapel, Bolton, has been received from Mr. J. Percy Taylor, on behalf of his sisters, brothers and himself, in memory of his mother.

Mr. Harry Lismer, son of Rev. H. Fisher Short, Bootle, has gained a Secondary School Scholarship of £80 a year for 3 or 4 years. He is 17 years of age, and matriculated 2 years ago with six distinctions.

Where do we Stand ?

IN matters of religious opinion every man ought to know what he stands for. If he professes to be a Unitarian he should frankly say so. Dr. James Martineau once said: "If anyone, being a Unitarian, shrinks, on fitting occasion, from plainly calling himself so, he is a sneak and a coward." Those are strong words. But in theology of the Christian sort one must be either Trinitarian or Unitarian. If not a Trinitarian he is a Unitarian, and it is cowardly of him if he refuses to admit that it is so. If he says he is a "Free Catholic," that may be either one or the other, and he ought to make it clear which of the two he is.

Dr. James Freeman Clarke, of America, once described the position of Unitarians as belief in—

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
Progress upward and onward for ever.

But that is not enough. It does not put the position clearly. Trinitarians may truly say that they believe in those five points. They do not make the distinction at all clear. They need to be more clearly defined in some such way as follows:—

(1) The Unity of God the Creator as one person only, the everlasting Father of all mankind.
(2) The Universal Brotherhood of Man.
(3) The Leadership of Jesus as a real human being.
(4) Salvation of all men by character.
(5) Progress upward and onward for ever for all mankind.

With these added qualifications the five points are made to state more plainly what we Unitarians stand for. But even then some important mattters are omitted, including—

(a) Freedom to seek for and to accept new revelations of truth.
(b) The essential goodness or divinity of human nature.
(c) The inevitable victory in all men of good over evil.

Every Unitarian is free to state his religious beliefs in his own way. It has been said briefly of Unitarianism that—

Its keyword is—Unity.
Its theology is the Unity of God.
Its sociology is the Unity of Man.
Its religion is the Unity of Man with God.

Unitarians agree in the following:—The Unity of God in one person, the heavenly Father; the Unity of Mankind as God's children; the Unity of Jesus as one being—a real man; the Unity of Truth, as all truths agree; the Unity of Salvation—the safety of all bound up with the safety of each. But every Unitarian is free to accept any new revelation of truth that may come from fresh researches into science, or other exploration, and to adapt his statement of belief in accord with it; and any congregation of Unitarians existing as a church is free to do the same. But such freedom does not take away the obligation of the individual to frankly state what he stands for NOW for the help and guidance of others. If he is a Unitarian now, whether he may ever be anything different or not in the future, he should not shirk the duty of letting the world know where he at present stands, by openly associating himself with the people who share his beliefs.

What is a moral obligation on the individual to say what he stands for, is no less so on the society of individuals organised as a church to do the same. Should there be a different standard of morality for Unitarians collectively from that which is imposed on them as individuals? Is it not as much the duty of a church to say what it stands for and to declare its message, as it is for any of its members? If so the words of Dr. Martineau already quoted may be applied to a church as much as to an individual. If any church consisting of Unitarians, shrinks from plainly calling itself Unitarian it is failing in its duty. But Dr. Martineau did not apply the same moral standard to the church as to the individual. He said: "If, being of our catholic communion, he calls his chapel or its congregation Unitarian, he is a traitor to his spiritual ancestry, and a deserter to the camp of its persecutors."

In saying that the beloved doctor was clearly in error. He was unwittingly attempting to make Unitarians and their churches to be subject to the authority of their spiritual ancestors. He was branding all Unitarians who could not accept his dictum as "traitors" and "deserters" because they only did just what he did—exercised the right of private judgment. Freedom from fixed creeds is a fundamental principle with all Unitarians, and with their churches. But that does not take away the freedom of these churches to say what they stand for now, nor to say that they are what they are at present—the churches of Unitarians, and therefore Unitarian churches. They are still free to become something else when they find anything better. We stand for freedom and for all the unities of Unitarianism, but ours are no longer free churches if they are to be tied in bondage to their spiritual ancestors so that we cannot exercise the liberty of giving our

churches the name which represents their present faith, with freedom to alter it whenever it no longer expresses the faith.

We refuse to be held down by the "dead hand" of the past. If our spiritual ancestors used their freedom in the way that seemed best to them we may surely use ours in the way that seems best to us. They rejected bondage to fixed creeds, so do we, and we equally reject bondage to fixed methods. Let us know where we stand, what we stand for, and frankly own and glory in the name that truly describes us and our churches.

Unitarian Worthies.

By Rev. ARTHUR W. FOX, M.A.

XXII.—SIR CHARLES LYELL.

MANY distinguished men of science have been Unitarian, or at least anti-Trinitarians, such as Sir Isaac Newton. Among them have been few of higher attainment in his own branch of geology than Sir Charles Lyell. He was a native of Forfarshire, and was born on November 14th, 1797. His education began at Ringwood, Midhurst, and Exeter College in Oxford. Here he studied under Breckland, from whom he drew his love for geology, in which he was to earn so much distinction. He became Professor in this science at King's College in London. He was knighted in 1848, and sixteen years later made a baronet in recognition of his high attainments.

He may be described as the forerunner and leader in modern geology. His scientific treatises are written in a beautiful style which never fails to interest and grip the reader. Though he shed his orthodoxy, his scientific pursuits strengthened his belief in God. His "Antiquity of Man" is still famous: At its close he emphatically denies that his investigations lead to materialism. He was able to realise what men like "Nunquam" have failed to see—the ever-increasing supremacy of mind over matter. When he went to America he fell in with Unitarians, of whom he became one. He became a constant worshipper in Little Portland Street Chapel. He had imagined that Unitarian preaching would be wanting in heart; but he found it to his mind, and he was never ashamed of owning his convictions.

His religion pervaded the whole of his life; it was never obtrusive, yet never hidden, so that "his light shone before men to the glory of God." As a teacher he was most attractive, and his influence was as great as the power of his teaching. He had alike the dignity and modesty of the great man of science, who realised that science revealed to man God's method of working in the universe. To the end he held fast to the truth of immortality, finding nothing in his researches to disturb his faith, and much to confirm it. He died on February 22nd, 1875, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, a distinction richly earned by his ability and character.

His was a reverent soul, though he was able to hold his own in controversy. When he proved the antiquity of man and disestablished the historical truth of the story of Adam, he realised that the foundation was removed from the doctrine of Atonement. But he learned a simpler and truer view of the character and being of God, which grew in distinction as he grew in years. Caring little for the term agnostic, he found that he did know something of the great first cause of all. By this knowledge his life was guided and his science put in its right place as the handmaid of religion.

He died as he had lived—in peace and well-earned honor. His fame was European, but his heart was lowly. So it is that simple Unitarianism can give a great man of science something to live by and a sure conviction of immortality.

See "Dictionary of National Biography" and "Memorable Unitarians."

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.—Rev. M. B. Skelland is resigning at Doncaster; Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., has been ordained to York Street Church, Belfast; Mr. Geo. D. Foote is appointed Assistant Missionary at Mill Street Mission, Liverpool; Rev. J. W. Bishop has resigned at Cullompton through failing strength.

DEATHS.—Mrs. S. E. Naylor, Auckland, N.Z., 78; Mr. Wm Eckersley, Lowton, Lancs., August 13th, 63; Mrs. F. T. Wright (of Atherton), Llandudno, August 14th; Charlotte Anne, widow of the late Rev. Thomas Carter, Paignton, August 15th, 76; Mr. Benjamin Blears, Atherton, August 18th, 62; Miss Carstairs, Liverpool; Miss M. A. Hawkins, of Clapham Common, London, at Inverness, August 22nd, 61; Mr. Walter Harrop, Cleckheaton, August 26th, 65; Mr. Thomas Gates, Cardiff, August, ——, 67; Mrs. Hill, Cardiff, August ——, 83; Mrs. E. G. Green, London, August 23rd, 35; Mr. Herbert G. W. Scott, of Dunmurry, Co. Antrim, at Warford, near Knutsford, August ——, 56; Mr. A. R. Hargreaves, Accrington, August 19th, 31; Mr. Henry Clarkson, Stockport, September 8th, 74; Mr. Godfrey B. Holt, Liverpool, September 13th; Mr. Allen Edwards, F.C.A., Birmingham, September 16th, 71; Mr. Wm. Lindsey Badcock, Stowmarket, September 16th, 52.

A correspondent in the "Inquirer" fears that there is a tendency amongst Unitarians to enforce a definite creed. That is impossible. Unitarians hold to their freedom to change their beliefs whenever any new light renders it necessary, but in all honesty they should frankly say what they stand for now, and do all they can to propagate their faith in clear and definite terms.

Miss Catherine Harris, of Leicester, has been conducting a successful Unitarian Mission at Yeovil, and Rev. W. Bottomley, resident minister, has carried on a series of open-air meetings on week-nights with good results.

Church Interchanges.

By the Rev. WILLIAM C. HALL, M.A.

IN this article I shall put forward a suggestion which has been turned down by two of our district associations and which probably would have been turned down by most of their congregations if it had been put before them. I shall do so for two reasons: Because I have a rather nasty habit of "returning to my muttons," and because I am not yet persuaded that it is useless.

Whilst I believe in our congregationalism as a principle, I believe we have suffered in the past and shall suffer more in the future through its exclusiveness. I suppose I am regarded as a minister of the Unitarian denomination, but as a matter of fact there are no such persons as ministers of the Unitarian denomination. The denomination as such gave me no status as a minister, and it has no claims upon me other than those I personally admit and voluntarily satisfy. I am simply the minister of one of our congregations, for so long as the members and I think it desirable to work together; and if any other congregation asks me to preach any Sunday it does so knowing that it has no recognised claim upon my services and that I am under no obligation to render them. My responsibility is simply to the congregation which for the time being supports me as its minister. It expects as much of my time as I can give it, and if its work calls for all my time it expects that I shall not give any of it to any other body of people. So it happens that the busier a congregation is the less it will, or can, allow its minister to be serviceable to our churches as a whole.

My suggestion is until we get what we ought to have, the officially denominational recognition of our ministers as ministers of the denomination, that our district associations should make themselves truly representative organisations of our congregations, and that the appointment of a minister to a congregation should carry with it his appointment as a minister of the association with specified duties to it. The discussion of these would no doubt be a pretty debate; but when people get to the discussion of things they sometimes get to the things themselves, and when they don't, of course, they don't—but this seems to be a subtle truth that requires hard learning. Now let one duty be that the minister shall preach once a quarter in some other place, under the direction of the association: Let each congregation admit this right of the association, or body of congregations that can be conveniently organised, in respect of its ministers, and let the association so plan these interchanges as to ensure that every minister within its area shall periodically be heard in every church, and play his part in the attempt to establish new congregations. So through a slight modification of our congregationalism our associations might become more effective agents of our faith, and our congregations be drawn into closer sympathy and co-operation.

The Unitarian Women's League.

By Miss E. JOHNSTONE.

MANCHESTER District Branches held a very successful and enjoyable Garden Party at Summerville in July, which resulted in over £100 being raised. Central League Funds and the Fund for Distressed Widows of our Ministers will share this amount. The weather favoured the visitors, and over 200 friends spent a happy time in the grounds. Dr. and Mrs. McLachlan acted as hosts, together with the President, Mrs. Woodhouse. A very clever display of English Folk Dances was contributed by the Flowery Field Centre of the English Folk Dance Society. Miss Storrs gave a very good report of the Whit-week Meetings. The American Sale, to which branches and individuals contributed, together with the ice cream stall, proved a successful source of revenue.

A few of the members of Stockport and Longsight branches did heroic work in providing crockery, tea, etc., and their work proved no small addition to the successful whole.

ACCRINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD BRANCHES held their summer meeting at Todmorden in August. Mrs. Ewbank conducted the service, and her beautiful address on "The Influence of Speech," in which she emphasised the unknown and far-reaching effects of idle words, left a strong impression on her hearers. Tea followed, after which the delegates met, and a discussion resulted in a decision to purchase copies of "International Relations," to be sent to the branches for study and discussion. At the evening meeting Mrs. Wm. C. Hall gave an instructive and thoughtful talk on "Women's Social Experiments during the Last Century," particularly in regard to the work performed by Unitarian women.

THE STOURBRIDGE BRANCH spent a delightful afternoon and evening in June at Redcliffe, Kinver. Mrs. Wight conveyed greetings from the Stamford Street Branch in welcoming the members. A short business meeting preceded tea, after which the Rev. Rosalind Lee gave an interesting account of her tour in U.S.A., Canada and South Africa. This was supplemented by Miss Hargrove's account of her

visits to our New Zealand and Australian churches.

" The Inquirer " has most interesting articles and letters on the subject of "Anglo-Catholicism, ' which deserve the attention of our members. An evening would be well spent in discussion of this question during the coming session of lectures, for this movement is likely to have far-reaching effects on the religious life of the nation.

For the Children.

By Rev. H. FISHER SHORT.

MYSTERIOUS MISTER BROWN.

You must have noticed those clean, smiling old gentlemen who look like the loveliest of grandfathers. Well, he was just like that. That he could possibly be disliked would never have occurred to you. But he was. The village gossips complained that he was " reserved," which sounds awful, but isn't. Though he had been in Thornwell six months nobody knew his name or where he came from, and somehow it wasn't easy to ask him questions. Worse still, they said he was " stingy," and it looked rather like it. He was his own housekeeper and did his own shopping and was very careful about the halfpennies. Then, he was never known to give away anything—a most serious offence in Thornwell. Not knowing what to call him, however, was a great bother. That simply could not be allowed to go on, and the grocer hit on a brilliant idea.

" Good night, Mr. Brown ! " he called after him as he was leaving the shop. And though the old gentleman responded politely, " Good night, sir," the grocer wasn't entirely satisfied. Still, he hadn't denied the name, and after that everybody addressed him as " Mr. Brown," but behind his back the gossips called him " Old Skinflint." A little later such startling things began to happen that the mysterious Mr. Brown was all but forgotten.

One morning Widow Marshall, who lived mostly on scraps given by the neighbours, found that a ten-shilling Treasury note had been pushed under her door. There was much wrinkling of brows as to the name of the giver, especially as other notes followed by post. Before the gossips could recover their breath, surprise broke out in another quarter. Mary Smith, whose husband was out of work, was almost hopeless about feeding and clothing her six children, when welcome parcels began to arrive from the city. To the quizzing neighbours the carter said he had no more idea who was ordering them than the man in the moon.

Suspicion fell on " old Jack Sampson," a retired builder, who had been known to give the children an occasional copper. Someone hinted to him about generosity, but he just smiled and walked off. And Mother West, the village oracle, exclaimed, " I knew as much ! " Such excitement the parish had never known, and it reached a high pitch when, all unexpectedly, the handsome car of a city doctor drew up at the door of Mrs. Rodgers, whose daughter had been ill for years.

" Though we never see you at church, Mr. Sampson," said the Vicar, one day, " I really must thank you for your great kindness to the poor."

" Me? " said Jack Sampson, going red. " You mustn't thank me, Mr. Ransom."

" Ah, my good friend," said the Vicar, gripping his hand, " that's only your modesty."

Before Jack Sampson could utter another word the Vicar had disappeared round the corner.

" No idea old Jack was such a lord bountiful," sneered George Mills at the Red Lion that night.

" He's changed a goodish bit since I used to work for him," added Jim Birks.

" Ay, and I know a bit about that," said Bill Brierley, with a wink.

" Same here, mate," exclaimed two or three more.

" Ah, well," said George, " they say it's never too late to mend, so we'll let bygones be bygones."

The surprises continued to crop up, and always at the right place and time. Shoeless feet were shod, fireless grates began to blaze, the sick were nursed, promising lads were given a lift, until there was hardly a pressing need that wasn't met. Curiously enough Jack Sampson was scarcely ever seen, which was put down to his dislike of a fuss. This was not to Mother West's liking, and one day she surprised him in his garden. Uninvited, she went straight to him and told him she had come to thank him for the whole village.

" But I don't know anything about it," he stammered.

" Come now, Mr. Sampson, you can't deceive me," she crooned. " Why, the Vicar said you'd as good as admitted it."

" Nothing of the kind," he blazed.

" But you didn't deny it," she snapped.

" Well, I deny it now, so be off ! " And he shouted so fiercely that Mother West simply fled.

(To be continued.)

A rally of friends from our mid-Cheshire churches was held at Knutsford. There was afternoon service, tea, ramble, and dancing. Over 70 attended.

National Unitarian Temperance Association.

Hon. Secretary: Mr. E. F. Cowlin, 53, Lewisham Park, London, S.E. 13.

ESSEX HALL, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

The Association has issued the following circular letter:—

1st September, 1923.

Dear Sir (or Madam),

A great victory! Yes, young people under eighteen are to be helped by law to resist the temptation to drink intoxicants. Let us show our thankfulness by pressing forward to further conquests.

At heart the people are sound on the Temperance question, but some are not yet fully persuaded. More educational work is necessary. Men, women and children are still destroyed for lack of knowledge; they need guidance, the inspiration of example, and encouragement to fight against harmful habits. Who will guide, inspire and encourage? God grant that many will say: "Here am I, send me."

Whilst continuing our work for the young, we must labour with more earnestness in the interests of adults, the "moderate" drinkers, and impress on them the advantages of total abstinence to themselves and the nation; nay, let us urge it as a DUTY. This means consecration and it may mean self-denial if one is not already an abstainer. The knowledge that the "coming of the kingdom" is delayed by strong drink should spur us on.

For these reasons and others we respectfully and very earnestly ask you to do YOUR utmost for Temperance reform, and in any case to make full use of

TEMPERANCE SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28th, in Church and School.

We shall be glad at any time to send pamphlets free for distribution if you will please let us know the number you can make use of.

If, on Temperance Sunday or other occasion, a retiring or ordinary collection can be taken in aid of the funds of the Association we shall be thankful.

Yours sincerely,

EDITH J. TITFORD, President.

E. F. COWLIN, Secretary,

53, Lewisham Park, London, S.E. 13.

A postcard report of any services held would greatly oblige.

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